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NEWS RELEASE

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KANSAS CITY, KANSAS BROTHERS SENTENCED IN LARGE DRUG TRAFFICKING CASE

KANSAS CITY, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that **Fidel Soria, 28, Kansas City, Kansas and Aureliano Soria-Sanchez, 24, Kansas City, Kansas**, were sentenced on December 17, 2003, by U.S. District Judge Carlos Murguia.

Fidel Soria was sentenced to 180 months in prison on conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute cocaine, methamphetamine and more than 50 kilograms of marijuana, and to 185 months for money laundering. The sentences were ordered to be served consecutively for a total of 365 months, which is to be followed by 3 years of supervised release.

Aureliano Soria-Sanchez was sentenced to 180 months in prison on conspiracy to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute cocaine, methamphetamine and more than 50 kilograms of marijuana, and to 52 months for money laundering. The sentences were ordered to be served consecutively for a total of 232 months, which is to be followed by 3 years of supervised release.

Melgren stated that these sentences were the result of a joint multi-agency investigation that began in 1997. This investigation resulted in the seizure and forfeiture of approximately \$ 1 million in cash, jewelry, vehicles, and real estate. The amount of illegal drugs attributed to this drug trafficking organization as a result of this investigation was more than 10 times the maximum amount that is computed under the Sentencing Guidelines, which the Court relied upon in ordering these sentences.

Melgren said that Soria and Soria-Sanchez, Jr. each entered guilty pleas to drug trafficking and money laundering charges on November 12, 2002.

“Drug trafficking is a crime that revolves around money. In these cases a complete financial investigation often becomes key to a conviction,” said Al Patton, Special Agent in Charge of IRS Criminal Investigation. “This is what our agents are trained to do.”

Melgren commended the excellent work of the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Department of Homeland Security - Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (formerly U.S. Customs Service and Immigration and Naturalization Service), Kansas City, Kansas, Police Department, Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation, Kansas Bureau of Investigation, Department of Housing and Urban Development - Office of Inspector General, Social Security Administration - Office of Inspector General, and the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department in this investigation and Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Rask, with the assistance of Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregg Coonrod from the Western District of Missouri, in this joint prosecution.